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THAT WINTER IN BASTOGNE

Gen. Anthony McAuliffe, the defender of Bastogne, and Gen. Bruce C. Clark, commander of the 7th Armored Division's forces at St. Vith, will join other World War II leaders at the 20th anniversary observance of the Battle of the Bulge at the Club Wednesday.

Other guest speakers will include Gen. Elwood "Pete" Quesada, commander of the 9th Tactical Air Command during the Ardennes fighting; Gen. J. Lawton Collins, 7th Corps commander, and Gen. Ernest Harmon, CO of the 2nd Armored Division. Another guest will be Thomas Kelly, current president of the Medal of Honor Society, the national association of men who have won their

(Cont'd on page 3)

By WALTER CRONKITE

That winter of '44-'45 looked like not a bad one — back at headquarters, that is. It was cold and miserable in the foxholes, and the hope of being out of them by Christmas had long since faded. But the fighting was desultory and the activity limited to occasional patrols and speculating on what the brass was dreaming up to vault the Rhine.

I was back at Monty's rear-echelon headquarters in a furlined foxhole we'd given the code name Brussels. That wasn't much of a subterfuge because that's the way it was listed on the maps — ours and theirs.

(Cont'd on page 3)

'NUTS!'

By FRED MACKENZIE

(The writer was the only correspondent in Bastogne during the siege; he arrived with the 101st Airborne Division from Camp Mourmelon, France, on Dec. 19 and left Dec. 27 after the siege was broken. MacKenzie is now editorial writer for the Buffalo Courier-Express.)

Was "Nuts" General McAuliffe's answer literally to the German surrender ultimatum at Bastogne?

That question usually is put to me when someone learns I happened to be in Bastogne as a newspaper reporter on that miserable and cold day 20 years ago when the General received and replied to the ultimatum. A lot of speculation has had it that the General actually replied with an obscenity less fit to print and that it was an afterthought to tell the world the response was "Nuts."

Here is what I know about it:

Around noon that day — Dec. 22, 1944 — I was in a medical-aid station talking with some of the wounded and trying to make like I expected to take off any minute to file their stories with Press Wireless when General McAuliffe's aide, Lieutenant Frederic Starrett, caught up with me.

"General McAuliffe wants to see you at the C-P," Starrett said.

The summons worried me a bit because that morning — the fourth of the

battle and the second day of our encirclement — I had undertaken with some misgivings to "alert" the General to the danger of spies in our midst!

The General, with his delightful gift of understanding, has kidded me about this since; but then a lot of us recall that people were jumpy in those days even as far back as Versailles.

Anyhow, Sid Davis, the 101st Airborne Division's Communications Officer, has sparked the idea by reporting that they were getting as many as 100 wire cuts in 24 hours. Any scared reporter could see that maybe they were not all from the shells and bombs that were battering us: so I suggested some of our German-speaking G-2 Section might be Nazi plants.

I wasn't completely sold on it, however, because when I went with Starrett about two hours later to the command-post I was thinking that perhaps General McAuliffe had decided a reporter as flighty as this shouldn't be allowed loose among his troops. Maybe he was calling me in to do — whatever a Commander does with a civilian subject to his orders under the "Assimilated Rank of Captain" on his battlefield.

"Sit down," said the General when I entered the small cellar room he occupied with Brigadier General Gerald J. Higgins, the 101st Airborne's assistant

commander. Higgins was at the end of the table. They both were poker-faced. I sat.

"Since you are so much interested in this battle, you should see this," General McAuliffe said, passing across the table a sheet of flimsy paper.

I read what turned out to be a copy of the 19-line ultimatum addressed "To the U.S.A. Commander of the encircled town of Bastogne" and signed "The German Commander". Even though it said "one German Artillery Corps and six heavy anti-aircraft battalions are ready to annihilate the U.S.A. troops in and near Bastogne" if they didn't surrender, I wasn't scared just then; only indignant.

"The sons of bitches!" I said. The General chuckled.

"Here's what I told them," General McAuliffe said, handing over a second sheet. Spaced over more than half of the 10-inch page were these words:

"TO THE GERMAN COMMANDER:

N U T S !

THE AMERICAN COMMANDER."

The next thing I knew, all three of us were laughing so hard we were almost falling off our chairs.

The Generals and two others of the Staff told me that General McAuliffe ex-

(Cont'd on page 7)

Argument on the Bastogne 'Miracle'

By PIERRE J. HUSS

I'm doing this piece by request to set the record straight once again in case the First Army boys claim that bunch of footsloggers won the war instead of the Third Army. How could McAuliffe ever have had the chance to say "Nuts!" to the Krauts if he hadn't figured that "Blood and Guts" Patton was on the way to save the First Army's hide?

In the first place, when the "Wacht am Rhein" — Hitler's code name for what Churchill dubbed the Bulge belly-punch — cut loose on Dec. 16 under a fog blanket stretching from Luxembourg to the Channel, Gen. Patton was pointing the Third Army for a breakthrough to the Rhine. He had buttered up Spaatz and Doolittle and gotten a pledge that on Dec. 19 their airforce would give him an air umbrella of 3,000 planes to soften up the Saar front for the big jumpoff. So you can imagine how pistol-packing George cussed when he got his traveling orders from Bradley in Luxembourg and on the 18th

from Ike in Verdun for a turn-about by two Third Army Divisions and the crack Fourth Armored.

I remember bumping into Hap Gay, the chief-of-staff of the Third, on the morning in Nancy when Patton gave orders to forget the Rhine and shove off the Luxembourg-Belgium fracas. Hap said with a wry smile: "Oh, sure, Goerge was sad about the Rhine. But his comment was: 'What the hell! Up there we can still kill plenty of Krauts'."

I was born in Luxembourg, and my mother was born in the house just the other side of the bridge in Bastogne. I knew the country well, although I hadn't been around there much since I left for the US as a kid. But I don't think they ever had such a cold and windy winter.

I found Patton hopping around Luxembourg City. He was quartered in the Alpha Hotel, with only Sergeant Mims, the driver, as his staff. I caught him on the wing and asked what things looked like. He shrugged and in his high voice

popped back: "What them Hun bastards can do, we can do. If the SOBs want rough stuff, we'll give it to them."

I guess on Dec. 23, when the sun broke through and the planes came over in droves, we all felt we had come back to life the first time since leaving Nancy. Patton gave Gen. Gaffey of the Fourth Armored the order to crash through into Bastogne on the day after Christmas. My mother's house was in ruins, but to me it was Christmas, despite the C rations. They told us the Third Army had accomplished a miracle. We knew that, and we correspondents knew even then that Patton and his Third Army would win the war. He credited everything to the Lord, and pinned the Bronze Star on Chaplain McNeil as a reward for praying above and beyond the call of duty. That was George Patton.

Pierre Huss, now Hearst's UN correspondent, was a wartime reporter for INS.

THAT WINTER

(Cont'd from page 1)

Our first hint of the trouble down on the Ninth Army front was a particularly understated briefing by the British PRO.

"A spot of bother . . ." or words to that effect was the way he described a "slight intensification" of enemy action in the Ardennes.

I didn't even bother to include the information in my file that day. Little did I know that already the Ninth Army press camp had been overrun and the Germans were hell-bent for Brussels.

That bit of startling information came that night with the dramatic arrival at my apartment-bureau of five of the most harried, woe-begone correspondents I had seen since Arnhem.

They were refugees from the Ninth Army front, desperately looking for communications and led by our (I was UP then) Jack Frankish.

I heard then of the full scope of the Von Rundstedt offensive — or at least as much as they knew, and, for the moment, that was enough.

I briefed Jack on 21st Army HQ communications and lit out for the front myself. (Jack filed, and went back to find 9th Army. He was killed by an artillery burst a few days later.)

That drive toward the front was the most colorful and frustrating of the war. The roads looked like Dunkirk. The American Army seemed to be in full and confused flight.

Driving down normally quiet highways was like trying to go the wrong way on the Red Ball Express.

And then we began running into the road blocks with properly suspicious GI sentries first of all doubting our identity and, second of all, unable or unwilling to give us any information as to headquarters locations.

We had started for Namur and made

it that far, but then were forced further and further south until, two days later, I found the first communications at Ninth Air Force headquarters in Luxembourg.

Here was the fur-lined foxhole of all times. Ben Wright as Ninth Air Force PRO had just ensconced his forces in the Cravat Hotel when the Bulge began. While the Third Army press corps camped out in a miserably cold school room (why were school rooms — usually first grade ones with desks under which grownup knees won't fit — always selected as headquarters?) over in Esch, those of us lucky enough to affix ourselves to Ben's ministrations lived in luxury with hot baths and flowing champagne.

One of the more interesting aspects of press coverage of the Bulge was the attraction that press camp had for reporters who hadn't budged out of Paris since liberation. They found they could live in the manner to which they had become accustomed and still be in the front lines.

The night the Germans managed to drop a few mortar shells into Luxembourg City almost ended that idyll.

It was some of the female correspondents among that group that gave a start to General Patton as he strode into his new headquarters after his first look at the battlefield north of Luxembourg.

"I didn't know there were going to be women present," he piped in that high-pitched squeak of his. "That puts me under wraps."

"What I was going to say was: 'What do you do when you've got a monkey hanging by his tail in a tree? You cut his - - off! That's what I'm going to do to Von Rundstedt.'"

He did, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Cronkite is managing editor of CBS News.

Reunion

(Cont'd from page 1)

nation's highest military award.

Among other attractions at the Bulge Reunion: free dinner wine, courtesy of Browne Vinters Co., door prize courtesy of Belgian Tourist Office, music and a documentary film on the Ardennes offensive.

Reservations are required for the reunion which starts at 6:30 p.m. with cocktails, followed by dinner about 7:30 p.m. Price: \$6.50.

(photo from UPI)



20th Century Fox's "Goodbye Charlie," starring Tony Curtis, Debbie Reynolds and Pat Boone. Films by Inflight Motion Pictures, Inc.

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AT ST. VITH: US First Army soldiers reconnoiter in a snowbound street of St. Vith, Belgium, after the city's capture from German forces. Many of the buildings along the road were wrecked.

(photo from AP)

Hitler's Last, Unsuspected Gamble

By GORDON FRASER

(In 1944 a Blue Network correspondent with the First Army; now with NBC-Monitor.)

It was quiet that day in December, 1944, in the little town of Spa, Belgium, headquarters for Hodges' First Army. He had swept from Paris through Hitler's Siegfried line in three months. He was over the Roer River. Next was the Rhine.

Some correspondents had already gone back to London and Paris and were doing their think pieces on how the enemy was "done in". There was even speculation in high echelons as to how the collapse of the Third Reich would be announced when the time came.

First Army was strung thin—80 miles

from South of Aachen, Germany, to the border of Luxembourg to the south. Winter snows would soon be on us. This was no place to fight a war.

It was raining a cold drizzle that morning in Spa and there was fog over the meadows and the Belgian farm boy's four-legged milking stool sank into the soggy pasture land as he milked from cow to cow.

At breakfast that day of the 16th we didn't know that Hitler's last gamble was already underway, 20 miles to the East, and that Hitler had moved his command post from Berlin to the East bank of the Rhine to personally direct the onslaught. ...250,000 men, 1,000 tanks, 1,700 pieces of artillery, and a Luftwaffe front-



AT BASTOGNE: American GI's walk through a snowy street after German soldiers had relieved the divisions trapped there for weeks.

ed with jets, ME-262's.

My notes that first day say the German PW's taken earlier that morning in the 2nd Division area boasted ... "we'll be in Paris for Christmas". To this day, very few in the world realize how close Hitler came to succeeding.

By nightfall, the faces of the Belgian people around Spa were drawn with fear. "The Germans are coming back," they said, and some of them began the long walk to Liege, miles to the rear.

On the First Army front in the North, if the 2nd and the 99th hadn't held in front of the Elsenborn hill ridge, and the 30th at Stavelot, and the Engineers at Trois Pont—Hitler's phase plans might well have carried us into the English Channel. Those valiant men in the first 60 hours bought time for Hodges to build a defense shoulder running West to the Meuse River, a brilliant piece of military logistics.

For the next 40 days my notes tell of men in the snow with feet wrapped in pieces of blankets; rifles thawed over fires or with hot urine; soldiers with slices of dynamite in their helmets to blast fox holes out of the frozen earth; German tanks and Skorzeny's men in G.I. vic-

THE NIGHT BEFORE: NO FANFARE

By CY PETERMAN

Looking back twenty years it seems incredible that the greatest battle of World War II could have begun with no fanfare at all. The evening before was no different in the Ardennes than a month of previous evenings. I know. I drove the Skyline road that paralleled the sixty-mile front that ran from Luxembourg City all the way up to Spa, where First US Army relaxed quite content that the Western campaigns were pretty well wrapped up, and won.

It was only by chance that Bolton, the jeep jockey, and I missed that post-midnight shocker of Dec. 16, 1944.

During the ride I considered which of several stories should have priority, for on such quick-stops one filled a notebook with the resurgent 90th Infantry's advance under Gen. James Van Fleet. Or the touchy occupancy of Saarbruecken, where Corps headquarters was too busy pushing ammo and gas toward the front to take time to remove the bomb at the town's main entrance. The best story I decided would be about the 1,700 German civilians trapped in the mushroom caves on Franz von Papen's estate, halfway up the Siersdorf mountain.

We didn't stay too long in Wiltz, where the 28th Division was headquartered. Stan Horstmann, the P.R.,

insisted we stay overnight, have a good meal and go up to Spa in the morning. Instead I tossed a Belgian franc to decide; it came up heads for "go," thank God.

It was half an hour before sunset when we started, but evening comes fast in the Ardennes and when we glanced down the Skyline slope, we saw the Germans were washing up their mess gear, dinner finished.

"Seems to me there are more than last time we drove this road," I commented, but Bolton speeded up and said nothing. Then we came to a bigger concentration, and he slowed a little as we beheld bridging and trucks strung along the Our River, as if they had plans for a crossing. From back in the woods someone put three quick 20-millimeter shells against the hillside above, and Bolton floored the accelerator. We took a quick turn after that and I saw three Resistance chaps, the familiar F.F.I. armbands their only uniform.

"La route a St. Vith?"

"Non, Clervaux," they chorused.

We turned around and went back to the fork. It was over the road we left that Hasso von Manteuffel's spearhead came at 4 a.m. Smash over the 110th Infantry of the 28th Division at Clervaux.

In St. Vith people stared at the

(Cont'd on page 6)



th a street in Bastogne, Belgium, after the
pere for a week during the Battle of the Bulge.
(photo from AP)

uniforms and speaking English, in our
own columns; Germans cutting the throats
of Belgian kids to save ammunition; the
massacre of 70 American soldiers at the
crossroads by Malmedy; tanks sliding on
the ice like toboggans.

As the medic said as we went to pick
up the wounded, "...it's uphill and
downhill — through frozen swamps — you
gotta use logs so the tanks won't bog
down. Ya can't get a jeep through or even
an ambulance — you gotta use a half-track.
The Germans are all around in the woods.
The town's on fire. There's dead cattle
all over the place — and dead Germans,
too; and there's an old woman running
around like crazy, screaming, and the
shells are coming in from all directions
and she don't know where to go next.
There's two American soldiers sittin'
straight up by the side of a shell hole.
They're dead — frozen stiff, I guess....
Yeah — it's pretty rough."

Hitler had everything going for him.
He out-manned us; he out-gunned us; he
out-equipped us; he surprised us com-
pletely; and he had the weather. But he
lost and it finished him — because the
Allies had the one thing that brought
victory — THE AMERICAN SOLDIER.

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THE OVERSEAS PRESS BULLETIN

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NIGHT BEFORE

(Cont'd from page 5)

American press jeep, and and later I concluded they had rather soured faces. St. Vith was full of German sympathizers and they probably had an idea what was coming. But not all of what was coming.

On we drove, through Lignueville, past the Malmedy crossroads. It was dark and Bolton and I talked of the Wehrmacht grenadiers we'd seen along the stream and in the woods along that Ski line route. Except for the heavy equipment, the Germans looked like uniformed picknickers standing around in the snow.

Celebrities were always popping into Spa, so when we unloaded there were more. Roy Stockton, St. Louis Sportswriter, had brought in Dutch Leonard, Ducky Medwich and Frankie Frisch and they wanted to see General Hodges, Commander of First U.S. Army.

"So do I," I said; "Maybe he's still at the briefing room." He was.

After the introductions I told General Hodges what we had seen. I emphasized it looked like a concentration for more than a holding front. When I mentioned the bridging and halftracked trucks, he called me aside. I told him how thin our forces were spread, all along that road from Wiltz.

"I'll see what we can get for reinforcements, but I doubt if it will be much." He left for his office, muttering about a camouflage and chemical unit being all he had to put in.

And that was how it was, the last evening before the Bulge.

(A war correspondent for the Philadelphia Inquirer, Peterman is a public relations counselor.)

Club to Screen USIA Film on Kennedy

The USIA documentary on the late President, "John F. Kennedy: Years of Lightning, Day of Drums", will be shown at 8:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 21 at the Club.

Permission for the screening was arranged with USIA in Washington by Program Director Joe Newman.

Getting this film distributed to US moviegoers is the object of a current campaign by a number of film critics who have praised the hour and forty-five minute color documentary of the Kennedy

era. It cannot be shown legally because of restrictions on USIA (government) materials inside the country. Restrictions were made on the grounds that the agency could be used as a political arm for the administration in power. USIA materials are designed for distribution outside the country.

At least one effort has been made to introduce legislation in Congress to exempt this film from the restrictions.

George Stevens, Jr. is producer of the movie, written and directed by Bruce Herschensohn and narrated by Gregory Peck.

Reservations can be made by members and one guest only on a first come, first served basis for the limited capacity showing.

VIET NAM PANEL UNABLE TO AGREE ON SOLUTION

Military action cannot solve Viet Nam's increasingly complex problems, six experts told OPCers at a dinner last week.

Yet the six were unable to agree on an alternate solution. Suggestions ranged all the way from establishments of a full scale political action program to complete withdrawal of all U.S. forces and influence.

Viet Nam's present prospects are not very bright, it was agreed, and the situation is deteriorating rapidly. However, only Socialist David MacReynolds advocated U.S. withdrawal; the other five called for immediate steps to insure social and political reform.

In addition to MacReynolds, the speakers included author Joseph Buttinger, French scholar Prof. Bernard Fall, Michigan State University's Viet Nam expert Prof. Wesley R. Fischel, author and former Indochina correspondent Robert Shaplen and former U.S. ambassador to Thailand Kenneth Todd Young.

NEXT WEEK

Pictures and stories about many of last week's press club events are being held until next week's issue. to make room for the special articles on the Battle of The Bulge in this issue.

Pictures and stories will be carried on the appearances of Thanat Khoman, the Russian writers, and the African ministers; Book Fair, Dick Gregory Luncheon, Puerto Rico Christmas Dinner, and many others.

Calendar

Tues., Dec. 15 - Concert, with
Wilma Boselli, coloratura soprano
from Argentina. 8:30 p.m.

Wed., Dec. 16 - Reunion, Battle
of the Bulge. 6:30 p.m. \$6.50.

Wed., Dec. 16 - Luncheon, with
Indian Foreign Minister H.E. Sardar
Swaran Singh. 12:30 p.m. \$3.50.

Thurs., Dec. 17 - Children's
Christmas Party. 3:30 p.m.

Mon., Dec. 21 - Screening,
"John F. Kennedy: Years of Light-
ning, Day of Drums". 8:30 p.m.

Tues., Dec. 22 - Top-of-the-Club
Bistro Christmas Supper. Yuletide
Entertainment, door prizes. 6 p.m.
\$3.50.

Wed., Dec. 23 - Luncheon, with
Israel Deputy Foreign Minister Abba
Eban. 12:30 p.m. \$3.50.

Thurs., Dec. 31, - New Year's
Eve Gala. 9 p.m.



TO ENTERTAIN AT CHRISTMAS PARTY: Students from Upsala College in East Orange, N.J., will reenact the St. Lucia Festival, a traditional Swedish holiday custom, at the Dec. 22 Bistro Christmas Party at the Club. Event begins at 6 p.m.

NEW MEMBERS ACTIVE

Jean Bailey - Stringer for Time, Life, Writer-editor for U.S. Army, Canal Zone.

John Richardson, Jr. - President, Free Europe Committee, Inc. (Radio Free Europe), New York, New York.

ASSOCIATE

Gerard M. Bruder - Associate Publisher and Advertising Director, Show Magazine, New York, New York.

John L. Duffett - Free-lance, New York, New York.

Placement

New York City:

A-298 Wanted: Exp'd mag. editor for gen'l circ. publication with interests ranging from political events, economy and international affairs to literary materials. Good articles idea producer, with knowledge of dealing with mss. & writers. Salary open.

A-297 Wanted: Two PR/publicity writers for major motion picture producer in theatrical field. Must be good idea generators, and writers. Contact work only a minor requirement. Emphasis on press work in editorial area. Salary: \$150 to \$300 per week, depending on experience, productivity, etc.

A-294 Wanted Medical Science Writer - staff science writer for non-profit national agency. Newspaper medical reporting or heavy medical public information background. Know biological research field. Helpful - know media science writers. Salary to \$10,000.

A-293 Wanted: Assoc. Ed. Report & write interpretive, socio-economic features for nat'l bus. mag. in N.Y.C. area. Fin. background & consumer mag. exp. pfd. Growth spot with some travel. Salary: \$9,000-13,000.

A-292 Wanted: Indus. P.R. writer with bus. page or mag. exp., or indus. P.R. agency exp. To produce case histories based on use of products. Salary: \$8,000-8,500.

Upstate New York:

A-291 Wanted: Writer with creative mind, mgmt.-oriented, exp'd in exec. speech writing, corp. communications, with sound P.R. and news exp. For major corp. situated in Rochester. Salary: \$13,000-15,000.

California

A-296 Wanted: A knowledgeable publisher and managing editor, to fill two top posts for regional general circulation magazine which is being readied for publication. Only those exp'd in magazine publishing and handling top mag. editorial posts need apply. Opportunity for stock interest. Submit resumes, state salary bracket, desire to relocate in San Francisco area.

Puerto Rico:

A-295 Wanted: Writer to review night club shows, handle cafe society columns, pix captions, for well established San Juan weekly. Relocate in San Juan. Salary: \$175.00 per week. Send resumes to: Tony Beacon, San Juan Diary, San Juan, P.R.

Please write c/o Box No. attention S.E. Korsen, Placement Com. Chairman, Overseas Press Club. Only members' resumes will be forwarded directly to advertiser. Also, please contact chairman by mail at OPC or by phone (MU 7-4100) re any openings you may wish to have advertised in Bulletin on cost-free basis.

Mark J. Henahan - Assistant Manager - Special Projects, Advertising & PR, Sperry Rand Corporation (UNIVAC Div.), New York, New York; (F) City News Bureau (Chicago), Wichita Beacon, Cleveland Press, Buffalo Business.

William S. Jackson - Editor of Antique Automobile Magazine and WPSX-TV, Corning, New York.

Lester Victor Junger - Director of Media, Camp Fire Girls, Inc., New York, New York; (F) The Houston Post, KTRH-Radio (Houston), KNXT (Hollywood), Star-News Citizen (Pasadena, Texas).

Sheldon Meyer - Financial Reporter, New York Herald Tribune, New York, New York.

Roy I. Newborn - Editorial Board, New York Herald Tribune, New York, New York.

Classified

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'NUTS'

(Cont'd from page 2)

claimed, "Aw, Nuts!" when he first read the ultimatum, which seems to have been about a half hour before he summoned me. They agreed that no other answer seemed to fit; and so it went back out with the emissaries from the German lines.

The yellow pages that General McAuliffe handed me, the ink now considerably faded, are among my keepsakes from the Battle of Bastogne.

SCHONBRUNN

WASHINGTON PHOTO COVERAGE

color - black & white

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THE EARLY ONES WERE LUCKY TO GET BACK ALIVE IN NIGHTMARE

By JACK ROACH

(Then 1st Army Press Camp, now managing editor of Purchasing Week.)

By Dec. 16, 1944, the Christmas spirit had begun to permeate activities of the First Army press corps headquarters at Spa, Belgium.

It's hard to recall now who, if anyone, chose that morning to head down toward the First Army's spooky front in the Ardennes. In any event, that evening's G-2 briefing attracted no unusual advance interest.

Those who attended the briefing (the crowd was somewhat smaller than usual) pressured, with little success, for more details on the sudden flurry of "local action" attacks and counterattacks reported on the lightly-held and patrolled Ardennes front. Thus, the comfortable sanctity of Madame's bar at the Portugal Hotel held secure for one more night. The long nightmare began the next morning.

Probably the first to learn what was happening were *Gordon Fraser* and *Jack Shelley* who headed south early and before noon were dodging Tiger tanks along with hard-hit units of the 99th. They were lucky to make it back.

On the 18th, First Army headquarters itself began rolling back toward Liege. Packing also began at the press camp but the departure was delayed until long after dark. Once Master set up headquarters operations at the Palace Hotel at Chaudfontaine, between Spa and Liege, the press camp ultimately went back on the air in a nearby chateau.

But a few buzz bomb shorts made the stay there uncomfortable, and when Army decided to relocate still further into Belgium, back near Tongres, we took over the Palace. But not for long.

Prewi was just getting into operation on the afternoon of Dec. 23 when the Luftwaffe, which had spotted Chaudfontaine as a key headquarters when occupied by Army, came prowling. One plane, on a hit-and-run strafing and bombing run, wrecked the place, killing UP's Jack Frankish and seriously wounding the press camp CO, Lt. Col. Flynn Andrews, who died about a week later. Prewi's Bill Handford took some shrapnel in the arm and several Belgian guards also were killed and wounded. So, with Capt. Casey Dempsey in command, the camp was trucked up again and within a couple of hours was rolling toward Liege.

As a security measure, Prewi had to go off the air for several days. It finally set up again at Huy, about four hours ride from Tongres, but many correspondents filed from *Barney Oldfield's* Ninth Army headquarters at Maastricht or made nightly 100-mile trips into Brussels.

The Muckraker (press camp) crew, meanwhile, had moved into a convent school at Tongres, remaining there until after New Years. By Christmas, however, it was apparent that the Bulge had been contained, and one by one the battle weary press corps began drifting back to the comfort of Madame's accommodations at the Portugal in Spa.

They Still Ask "Why?"

By CHET HANSEN

Twenty years later and they're still asking how it could have happened. Who slipped up and why? Like a lot of others, they're still asking if the Bulge should have been allowed to happen.

What we sometimes forget, I'm afraid, is that even the best field commander does not always get things his own way in a war. If he's to be aggressive, he's got to take chances. And when you take chances, things sometimes go wrong — as they did during those first twelve days in the Bulge when the German grabbed the initiative for the first and only time in our battle for Europe.

General Bradley makes no bones about it in his recollections. He held a front of better than 200 miles. If he was to force his way to the Rhine, he would have to mass what he had on the north and south, take his chances, and hold lightly through the Ardennes. But didn't he remember what happened in 1914? Yes, of course, he remembered. But this time things were different. The US Army was on wheels. If the enemy tore a hole, he might rattle around in the woods. But there was nothing for him to take short of the Meuse. And while the terrain sponged up much of his effort, we could crank up our tanks and trucks and crush him from both flanks.

The day it started, we sold the German short, thinking it a spoiling attack; Patton had begun to hurt him in Lorraine. But General Bradley ordered the 10th Armored on the road that was to lead to the relief of Bastogne. This was the start of what became a great turning movement. General Bradley had taken a chance but he had hedged his bet by betting, quite correctly, on the great mobility of the American army.

When the Bulge was ended, the German was all but finished west of the Rhine. And when the Rhineland collapsed, the cracks it had opened spread all the way through the German front to the Elbe.

What is important about the Bulge is not whether we were wrong in not having detected the German buildup. What counts is how we reacted and how we were able to turn that offensive into a disaster from which the German never recovered. Those casualties in the Bulge spared us from what would almost certainly have been far heavier casualties in the months that followed. In the opinion of most commanders, the Bulge shortened the war. Had it not happened, we might have wished for it.

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